



# THE GREAT SMOKIES WRITING PROGRAM

The Community Writing Program of the University of North Carolina at Asheville

## WORKSHOPS IN POETRY & PROSE

### *Story Medicine for Aging: A Creative Writing Workshop*

**Meta Commerse**

(Lang 371, 1 credit hour) In-state tuition: \$155.81

We all have indigenous roots. In this class we remember and return to them in search of the wise voice of aging. We gather around some of the questions of life's winter... *What is your plan for this season? Who taught you to be an elder? Is your elder role in your family clear? Do you plant your hard-won wisdom and rich experience where it is wanted, respected, and tapped? Do you lift your voice as you need to? Did your elders leave you a satisfying example of aging? Will you define aging for yourself, or, are you bound to do it just as your elders did it?* We will reflect, discuss, study and write in this course. Join us as we re-write the aging script in a way that honors us and our community using the ancient modality of story medicine.

**Meta Commerse** earned her MFA in Creative Writing at Goddard College in Vermont. An award-winning writer, her black, historic, Chicago-based novel, *The Mending Time* is her own demonstration of story as medicine. She was the Founding Director of Story Medicine Asheville (2011-16), now CEO of Story Medicine Worldwide. Her classes are topic centered and conducted in ceremony to call forth the best and deepest writing from her students. The instructor's style of teaching is designed to spark healing as her class listens closely, thinks critically, and hones the writing craft while exploring today's challenging issues.

Class meets Wednesday afternoons, 2:00–4:30pm, at West Asheville Garden Retreat and Sanctuary, 200 Beverly Road West, Building 100, Asheville. 5 week class—starts March 14.

### *Riding the Wings of Pegasus: Poetry as Solace and Sublime*

**Tina Barr**

(Lang 372, 2 credit hours) In-state tuition: \$311.62

Many of us turn to writing poetry, and to reading it, for its ability to lift us up, to connect with a sense of presence. In ancient Greek myth, Pegasus was the divine winged stallion, which represented poetry's ability for flight. The poems we read will represent the witty, the dry, the comic, the combination of beauty and terror that creates the sublime, the celebratory, the reverent, and the compassionate. Their strategies will range from the traditional to the "documentary." This course will offer participants an opportunity to read poems that reflect those poetic qualities, and inspire, through a series of optional exercises, participant poets to write more! We will read new

poems by Lauren Camp and Cynthia Hogue, and classics by Galway Kinnell, Yusef Komunyakaa, Eugenio Montale, Sylvia Plath, James Wright, Frank O'Hara, Theodore Roethke, Philip Larkin, Lucille Clifton, Tom Lux, and Richard Wilber.

**Tina Barr's** third full-length book, *Green Target*, won the 2017 Barrow Street Press Book Prize, judged by Patricia Spears Jones, and is forthcoming in October 2018. Poems from that book have been published in *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *American Book Review*, *Atlanta Review*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *The Gettysburg Review*, *Hanging Loose*, *Louisiana Literature*, *Texas Review*, and elsewhere.

Class meets Monday afternoons, 1:00–3:30pm, at Black Mountain Center for the Arts, 225 West State Street, Black Mountain. 10 week class—starts February 19.

### *Ostranenie: Poetry as Practice of Awareness*

**Nickole Brown**

(Lang 372, 2 credit hours) In-state tuition: \$311.62

If we are all telling the same stories, how can we write anything new? The answer doesn't lie in writing about something completely different or in shocking your readers, but rather in writing about things you know intimately well—things perhaps you take for granted and don't even notice yourself anymore—in a new way. "Ostranenie," a Russian term used in literature translated as "defamiliarization," is defined as "the technique of forcing the audience to see common things in an unfamiliar or strange way, in order to enhance perception of the familiar." This course is an investigation into this, and throughout the semester, we'll use writing to refresh your senses with a deep practice of awareness. This course will use attention as a form of devotion—a raw, muscular kind of seeking and an unflinching dedication to scrubbing away one's preconceived notions of a thing in order to see it for what it really is—and will engage your imagination as well as your analytical faculties. Intended for writers of all levels who have a willingness to read, write, and experiment with language.

**Nickole Brown** received her MFA from the Vermont College, studied literature at Oxford University, and was the editorial assistant for the late Hunter S. Thompson. Her first collection, *Sister*, a novel-in-poems, was first published in 2007 by Red Hen Press and a new edition will be reissued by Sibling Rivalry Press in 2018. Her second book, a biography-in-poems called *Fanny Says*, came out from BOA Editions in 2015, and the audio book of that collection became available in 2017. Currently, she is the Editor for the Marie Alexander Poetry Series and teaches periodically at a number of places, including the

Sewanee School of Letters MFA Program, the Great Smokies Writing Program, and the Hindman Settlement School. She lives with her wife in Asheville.

*Class meets Wednesday evenings, 6:00–8:30pm at the Thomas Wolfe Memorial, 52 North Market Street, Asheville. 10 week class—starts February 21.*

### ***Healing Perspectives: A Creative Prose Workshop*** **Abigail DeWitt**

*(Lang 372, 2 credit hours) In-state tuition: \$311.62*

“What is healing but a shift in perspective?,” asked poet Mark Doty. Whether you’re reckoning with the ordinary stresses of everyday life or dealing with a major life challenge, certain kinds of writing can have a profoundly positive effect on your sense of well-being. In this workshop, we’ll explore a specific set of exercises that will help you access your own capacity for healing. Several of the techniques come from a course in Expressive Writing taught at the Duke University Center for Integrative Medicine; others have been developed over the years while teaching fiction and memoir. Together, the exercises allow us to experience both memory and the present moment in new ways, to discover how we can use shifts in point-of-view to transform our lives, and how we can take control of our own life stories. Writers will find the exercises useful for deepening their practice, but everyone is welcome—you don’t need to know anything about writing to benefit from these techniques.

**Abigail DeWitt** is the author of three novels, *Lili* (WW Norton), *Dogs* (Lorimer Press), and *News of Our Loved Ones*, forthcoming from HarperCollins in 2018. She has taught creative writing at Appalachian State University, Harvard University Summer School and the Table Rock Writers Workshop (formerly the Duke Writers Workshop).

*Class meets Tuesday evenings, 6:00–8:30pm, at the Thomas Wolfe Memorial, 52 North Market Street, Asheville. 10 week class—starts February 20.*

### ***Finishing That Memoir: How to Start, Structure, and Conclude Your Story***

**Christine Hale**

*(Lang 372, 2 credit hours) In-state tuition: \$311.62*

Whether you’ve written hundreds of pages or just a few, join this class for instruction, examples, and a friendly push toward finishing a fascinating true-life story. We’ll discuss techniques for priming memory’s sometimes balky pump, and, using published examples, identify effective techniques for memory-based storytelling. In weekly workshops, each participant will have the opportunity to share with the group one or more portions of memoir-in-progress for feedback. The goal of workshop is to help each other recognize and develop the emerging themes and narrative arcs that will best engage readers of our personal stories. This class provides an ideal way to continue work on a memoir begun in an earlier class, and is also suitable for beginning a memoir.

**Christine Hale** is the author of *A Piece of Sky, A Grain of Rice: A Memoir in Four Meditations* (Apprentice House Press 2016), set in the southern Appalachian Mountains, where she and her parents

grew up. Her debut novel *Basil’s Dream* (Livingston Press 2009) received honorable mention in the 2010 Library of Virginia Literary Awards. Her prose has appeared in *Hippocampus*, *Arts & Letters*, *Prime Number*, *Shadowgraph*, and *The Sun*, among other literary journals. She earned her MFA from Warren Wilson College, and teaches in the Antioch University-Los Angeles Low-Residency MFA Program as well as the Great Smokies Writing Program. She lives in Asheville.

*Class meets Monday evenings, 6:00–8:30pm, at RiverLink, 170 Lyman Street, Asheville. 10 week class—starts February 19.*

### ***Wordplay: To Get You in the Mood for Writing*** **Vicki Lane**

*(Lang 372, 2 credit hours) In-state tuition: \$311.62*

When you’re not ready to commit to a lengthy piece of writing but welcome the chance to discover or reignite the flame of creativity, *Wordplay* is for you. No take home assignments – just brief in-class writing to a wildly varied series of prompts, adaptable to any ideas you may already have and all based on different ways to tell a story. Genre, voice, imagery, mood, setting, dialogue – we’ll explore and discuss these and more, as well as inspiration, research, and process in its many manifestation. Who knows where this no-stress, no guilt workshop will lead you?

**Vicki Lane** is the author of the Elizabeth Goodweather mystery series from Bantam Dell as well as the standalone *The Day of Small Things*. She has taught with the Great Smokies Writing Program since 2006. She also teaches week-long summer workshops at John C. Campbell Folk School and Wildacres Writing Workshop.

*Class meets Tuesday evenings, 6:00–8:30pm, at RiverLink, 170 Lyman Street, Asheville. 10 week class—starts February 20.*

### ***Writing for Children and Young Readers***

**Linda Lowery**

*(Lang 372, 2 credit hours) In-state tuition: \$311.62*

In an encouraging workshop environment, beginning-to-experienced writers will explore fiction and creative non-fiction for ages 2 to 12, including picture books, easy readers, chapter books, and middle grade novels. Through creative exercises and prompts, students will focus on finding their natural, authentic voices as they experiment with various reading levels that best suit their stories.

Covered topics include: basic elements of character, setting, plot, theme, dialogue, and point of view; how words and art interact; industry-standard format; practical insights into publishing options; and perhaps most importantly, how not to preach or “dumb down” the story for this very bright and intuitive audience. By the end of the course, students will have the bones of the book they’ve chosen as their focus and an action plan to proceed on their project for young readers.

**Linda Lowery** is a *New York Times*-bestselling author of 65 fiction and non-fiction books for young readers from ages 2 to 12, with works ranging from rhyming picture books to serious early reader biographies, from the history of Native American nations to middle-grade fantasy adventures. Her books have been honored 2

on "Best Books of the Year" lists from the American Library Association, Bank Street College, *Publishers Weekly*, *The New York Times*, *Parents* magazine, and the International Society of School Librarians. Her travels bring color and cultural diversity to her work. She is currently writing a psychological thriller.

*Class meets Wednesday afternoons, 4:00–6:30pm, at Hanger Hall School for Girls, 64 W.T. Weaver Boulevard, Asheville. 10 week class—starts February 21.*

### ***Transforming Fallibility into Art: A Memoir Workshop***

**Jennifer McGaha**

*(Lang 372, 2 credit hours) In-state tuition: \$311.62*

In her craft book, *If You Want to Write*, Brenda Ueland says that "writing is not a performance but a generosity." At times, being generous writers means telling hard truths, even—perhaps especially—when those revelations make us look bad. A willingness to be vulnerable on the page, to reveal one's fallibility, can be a powerful thing. But how do writers harness this power? And how do we avoid the trap of the confessional memoir? Creating art from our mistakes requires us to dive deeply into our own psyches to explore our underlying hopes, fears, and motivations, to discover the story beneath the story and place our actions in a larger context. Designed for writers of all levels, this workshop will include short readings and generative exercises designed to bring those hidden truths to the surface. Each writer will also submit one piece for workshop discussion, and the instructor will provide extensive written feedback on all submissions.

**Jennifer McGaha** is the author of *Flat Broke with Two Goats*, a memoir of love, loss, and healing. Her writing has also appeared in *The Huffington Post*, *The Good Men Project*, *PANK*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Baltimore Fishbowl*, *Your Impossible Voice*, and *The Brooklynier*, among other publications. An experienced teacher of writing students of all ages, Jennifer earned her MA from Western Carolina University and her MFA from Vermont College of Fine Arts. She lives in Pisgah Forest with her husband and their two cats, four dogs, ten goats, and ever-changing number of laying hens.

*Class meets Wednesday afternoons, 3:30-6:00pm, at Quotations Coffee Cafe, 147 East Main Street, Brevard. 10 week class—starts February 21.*

### ***Motion in Poetry: Making Poems Flow***

**Eric Nelson**

*(Lang 372, 2 credit hours) In-state tuition: \$311.62*

In this workshop for writers of all levels, we will discuss and practice multiple elements (such as imagery, figurative language, and tension), but our primary focus will be on the ways a poem "flows" from start to finish—the rhythm, form, pacing, and tone. We will work on motion and movement in our own poems through prompts, exercises, and workshop discussion. Readings will be provided by the instructor.

**Eric Nelson's** six books include the award winning collections *Some Wonder* (Gival Press Poetry Award), *Terrestrials* (Texas Review Poetry Award), and *The Interpretation of Waking Life* (University of Arkansas

Poetry Award). He taught poetry workshops at Georgia Southern University for 26 years before moving to Asheville in 2015.

*Class meets Monday afternoons, 4:00–6:30pm, at the Yancey County Library, 321 School Circle, Burnsville. 10 week class—February 19.*

### ***Methodical Madness: A Fiction Workshop***

**Heather Newton**

*(Lang 372, 2 credit hours) In-state tuition: \$311.62*

This course is for writers of fiction who want to generate new work, and have work critiqued for revision in a supportive workshop setting. Students should come committed to writing in response to prompts, and giving and receiving thoughtful criticism as members of a community of writers. You may submit two pieces of up to 12 pages for group critique. For the last class, you will submit a piece of work to a publication or contest. Our text will be *Writing Fiction: The Practical Guide From New York's Acclaimed Writing School* (Gotham Writers' Workshop). The instructor may recommend additional reading.

**Heather Newton** is Program Manager for Asheville's Flatiron Writers Room. Her novel *Under The Mercy Trees* (HarperCollins 2011) won the Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award, was chosen by the Women's National Book Association as a Great Group Reads Selection and named an "Okra Pick" by the Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance ("great southern fiction fresh off the vine").

*Class meets Tuesday evenings, 6:00–8:30 pm, at the Flatiron Writers Room, 5 Covington Street, Asheville. 10 week class—February 20.*

### ***Developing a "Voice": A Fiction Workshop***

**Jamieson Ridenhour**

*(Lang 372, 2 credit hours) In-state tuition: \$311.62*

Fiction is woven together from a multitude of voices: omniscient authors, first person narrators, and each individual character all have distinctive manners and (hopefully) recognizable traits. What does it mean to have a "voice"? How do you distinguish between voices and maintain a cohesive style? This course will address these issues, looking at authorial and character voice as an integral part of storytelling. We'll analyze a range of examples of voice in fiction and drama, and then work on our own developing voices. Students will receive feedback from the instructor and fellow writers, revising towards 10-15 pages of prose focusing on some form of voice.

**Jamieson Ridenhour** is the author of the werewolf murder-mystery *Barking Mad* (Typecast, 2011) and the award-winning short horror films *Comerboys* and *The House of the Yaga*. His ghost play *Grave Lullaby* was a finalist for the Kennedy Center's David Cohen Playwriting award in 2012. Jamie's short fiction and poetry has appeared in *Strange Horizons*, *TheNewerYork*, *The Lumberyard*, *Mirror Dance*, and *Architrave*, among others, and has been podcast on *Pseudopod*, *Cast of Wonders*, and *Radio Unbound*. Jamie has a Ph.D. in the Victorian novel with an emphasis on Gothic fiction. In addition to publishing scholarly articles on Dickens, LeFanu, and contemporary vampire film, he edited the Valancourt edition of Sheridan LeFanu's *Carmilla* (2009) and published a book-length study of urban

gothic fiction, *In Darkest London* (Scarecrow, 2014). He has been teaching writing and literature for 19 years. His latest project, a serial fiction podcast called *Palimpsest*, is currently available on iTunes.

*Class meets Thursday evenings, 6:00–8:30 pm, at RiverLink, 170 Lyman Street, Asheville. 10 week class—starts February 22.*

### ***Keeping Ourselves Company: A Creative Prose Workshop***

**Tommy Hays**

*(Lang 473, 3 credit hours) In-state tuition: \$467.43*

This class is for prose writers who have been in at least one writing workshop. Students may have projects they are working on or may want to start something new in either fiction or creative nonfiction. Emphasis will be on reading and critiquing each other's work. The instructor will respond at length to three submissions with a limit of 15 pages for each submission.

***Instructor's permission required for admittance.*** Applicants should contact Tommy Hays at [hays@main.nc.us](mailto:hays@main.nc.us).

Tommy Hays's first middle grade novel, *What I Came to Tell You*, was chosen as a Fall 2013 Okra Pick by the Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance (SIBA), received starred reviews from *Publisher's Weekly* and *The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*, and was recommended by *The Atlanta Constitution* as one of 12 books of 2013 for younger readers. His novel, *The Pleasure Was Mine*, was a Finalist for the SIBA Fiction Award and has been chosen for numerous community reads. His other novels are *Sam's Crossing*, which has been re-released, and *In the Family Way*, winner of the Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award. He is Executive Director of the Great Smokies Writing Program and Core Faculty for the Master of Liberal Arts & Sciences program at UNC Asheville. He also teaches in the Converse Low-Residency MFA program.

*Class meets Wednesday evenings, 6:00– 8:30pm, at Asheville School, 360 Asheville School Road, Asheville. 15 week class—starts January 31.*

### ***Prose Master Class***

**Elizabeth Lutyens**

*(Lang 473, 3 credit hours) In-state tuition: \$467.43*

The Prose Master Class is a next step for those seeking an intensive writing experience. This small-group workshop is limited to experienced writers who are working on an ongoing project: a collection of essays or stories, a novel, a memoir. The writer should have at least sixty pages ready to submit for three critiques during the semester. An equally important commitment is for class members to offer the best possible attention to the work of others.

Each class begins with a craft session requiring outside reading, with the focus on the theme for the semester, which explores the resonance of the writing as well as craft. In lieu of some craft sessions, we will use a writing exercise to practice craft elements and inspire new approaches.

The emphasis for the course, always, is the review of student work, which includes extensive and in-depth comments from the

instructor. For each of the three rounds of workshops, the method will vary, from traditional to free-form to writer's choice.

***Admission to the Prose Master Class is by permission from Tommy Hays or instructor Elizabeth Lutyens.*** For more information about the Prose Master Class, contact Tommy ([hays@main.nc.us](mailto:hays@main.nc.us)) or Elizabeth ([elutyens@gmail.com](mailto:elutyens@gmail.com)).

Elizabeth Lutyens has led the Prose Master Class class for ten years. A former journalist, Elizabeth is a graduate of the MFA in Writing Program at Warren Wilson College and is completing her own work: a novel set in Boston and the Port Royal islands of South Carolina during the early 1860s. She is Editor in Chief of *The Great Smokies Review*, the online literary magazine published by The Great Smokies Writing Program and UNC Asheville.

*Class meets Tuesday evenings, 6:00–8:30pm, at Asheville School, 360 Asheville School Road, Asheville. 15 week class—starts January 30.*

## **IMPORTANT REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

To download an application form, visit [www.unca.edu/gswp](http://www.unca.edu/gswp).

- New students must include a \$20 application fee.
- Costs for in-state residents are listed with each class description. Students must complete an on-line residency verification process to qualify for in-state tuition. Non-state residents should contact the office for more information about class costs.
- Payment must accompany the application form. Please make checks payable to UNC Asheville or call (828) 251-6099 to pay with Visa or Mastercard.
- Confirmation packets and receipts will be mailed prior to the start of class.

### **Class Size**

To ensure that students receive individual attention from the instructor, enrollment is limited.

*Tommy Hays, Executive Director*

*Nancy Williams, Administrator, [nwilliam@unca.edu](mailto:nwilliam@unca.edu)*

*Great Smokies Writing Program at UNC Asheville*

*One University Heights, CPO 1860*

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